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Top Secret

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Tuesday 6 December 1977

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Tuesday, 6 December 1977.

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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ARAB STATES: Egyptian Reaction

25X1 [] //Egypt reacted sharply to the Tripoli communique by announcing yesterday that it will sever diplomatic relations with Syria, Algeria, Libya, Iraq, and South Yemen. The move could have the effect of forcing the summit participants to adhere to anti-Egyptian measures that they might otherwise have circumvented.//

25X1 [] Egypt had earlier ordered the return of its top diplomatic representatives from these Arab capitals and the USSR, but--piqued by the resolutions issued by its Arab opponents--decided to take more dramatic action against them.

25X1 [] Egypt's apparent decision not to break completely with the USSR indicates that, at least in this case, it considered the broader implications of its actions. By stopping short of a break with Moscow, the Egyptians have preserved the basic framework for a Geneva peace conference. Their rejoinder to Syria, however, will make it more difficult for either side to join the other at the negotiating table.

25X1 [] The Egyptians have seriously complicated the efforts of Saudi Arabia and other Arab moderates to restore an Arab negotiating front. More important, they have probably risked again annoying Saudi leaders, whose anger over Sadat's penchant for independent action had just begun to abate. Egypt's actions will also feed the fears of Egyptian intellectuals and other sophisticated Arabs that Sadat is playing into the Israelis' hands by making concessions without gaining anything in return and by further dividing the Arab world.

25X1 [] Sadat's decision to break relations was a reaction to the declaration at the Tripoli summit of a "freeze" in diplomatic ties with Egypt. The participants at Tripoli did not define their "freeze," but there is some evidence that, at least until Sadat responded with a clear break in diplomatic ties, the radicals intended that their move would have little practical effect.

25X1 [] Although the final summit declaration denounced Sadat's latest peace initiatives and affirmed a determination to frustrate similar attempts at "capitulation," the document did not reject peace negotiations altogether, and as such constitutes a victory for Syria's efforts to keep its options open.

25X1 [] Iraq's walkout came following the conference's adoption of what Baghdad described as a "servile" document, made necessary by Syria's refusal to accept the full rejectionist program of no peace, no negotiations, no recognition of Israel. Iraq had hoped to use the summit to force Syria to reconsider its previous support for a negotiated settlement.

25X1 [] Iraq wanted Asad and the other participants at Tripoli to denounce UN resolutions 242 and 338 and disavow any intentions to attend a reconvened Geneva peace conference, to request that Syria withdraw its forces from Lebanon and open its borders to the Palestinian movement, and to join in a military as well as an economic and political front for the total liberation of Palestine.

25X1 [] Iraq's proposals add up more to a condemnation of Asad than of Sadat. Baghdad still seems intent on holding its own summit, although a date has not yet been set and neither the Arab rejectionist states nor the Palestinians have indicated they will participate. []

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RHODESIA: Zambia Plans Meeting

25X1 [] //Zambian President Kaunda plans to send his principal political adviser, Mark Chona, to Rhodesia to talk with Prime Minister Smith, possibly as early as next week. With this meeting, Kaunda hopes to maintain the dialogue with the Rhodesians that began with Smith's surprise visit to Lusaka in late September.//

25X1 [] //The talks will be the first contact between the Zambians and Smith since the Rhodesian Prime Minister's announcement on 24 November that he will move ahead in an attempt to reach an independent settlement. Kaunda's ostensible reason for sending his adviser is to assess Smith's sincerity about an internal settlement and to determine what Smith meant by his conditional acceptance of the principle of one-man, one-vote.//

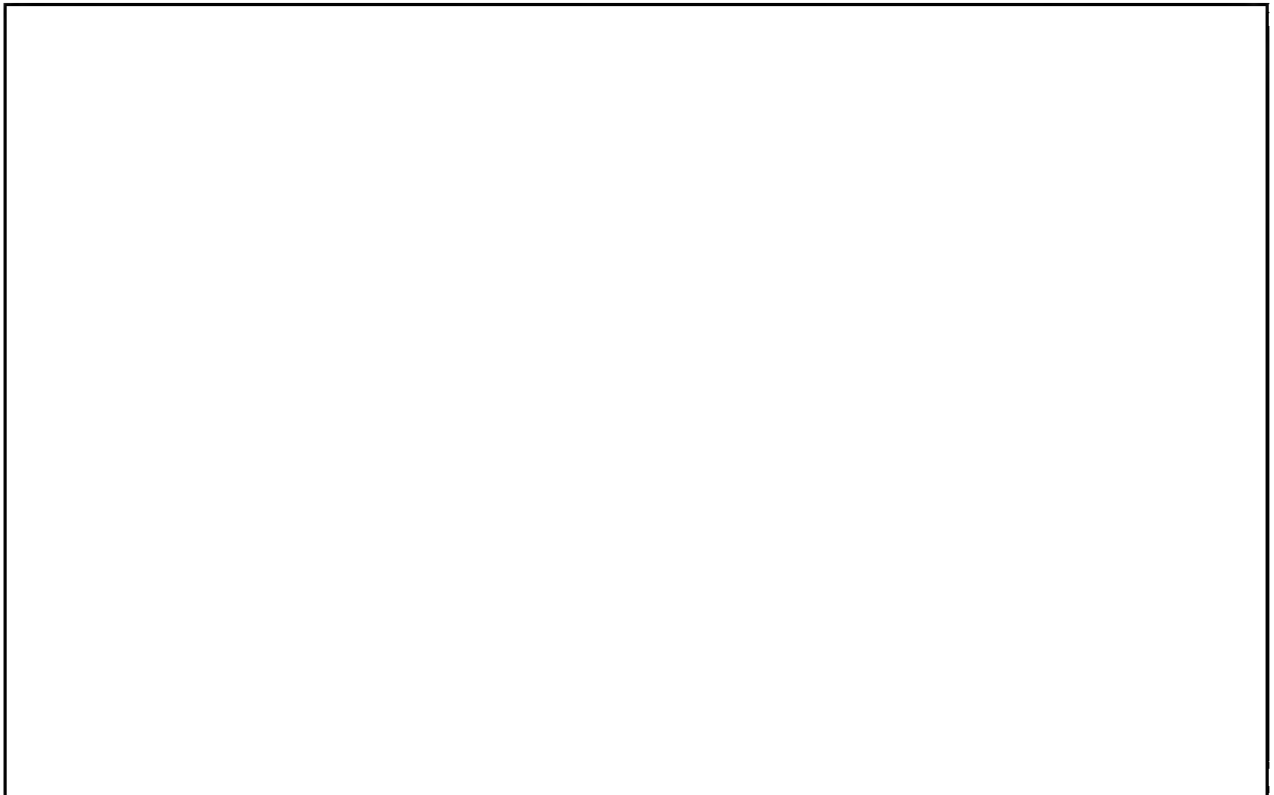
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[REDACTED]//Kaunda probably wants to raise again his own ideas on a settlement, which have put him at odds with Tanzanian President Nyerere. As an alternative to the frontline presidents' support of only the Patriotic Front, Kaunda has advocated some kind of government of national unity in which the major nationalist leaders would participate and to which power would be transferred. He also wants national elections in Rhodesia temporarily postponed once a national union government is installed.//

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[REDACTED]//More important, Kaunda probably wants to seek Smith's views of Joshua Nkomo, coleader of the Patriotic Front, now that the Rhodesian Prime Minister has begun talks with representatives of the other nationalist groups inside Rhodesia. In previous contacts between Kaunda and the Rhodesians, both sides have explored ways of finding a place for Nkomo in a settlement. The Rhodesians would like to detach Nkomo from the Patriotic Front and bring him into a settlement without Mugabe.//

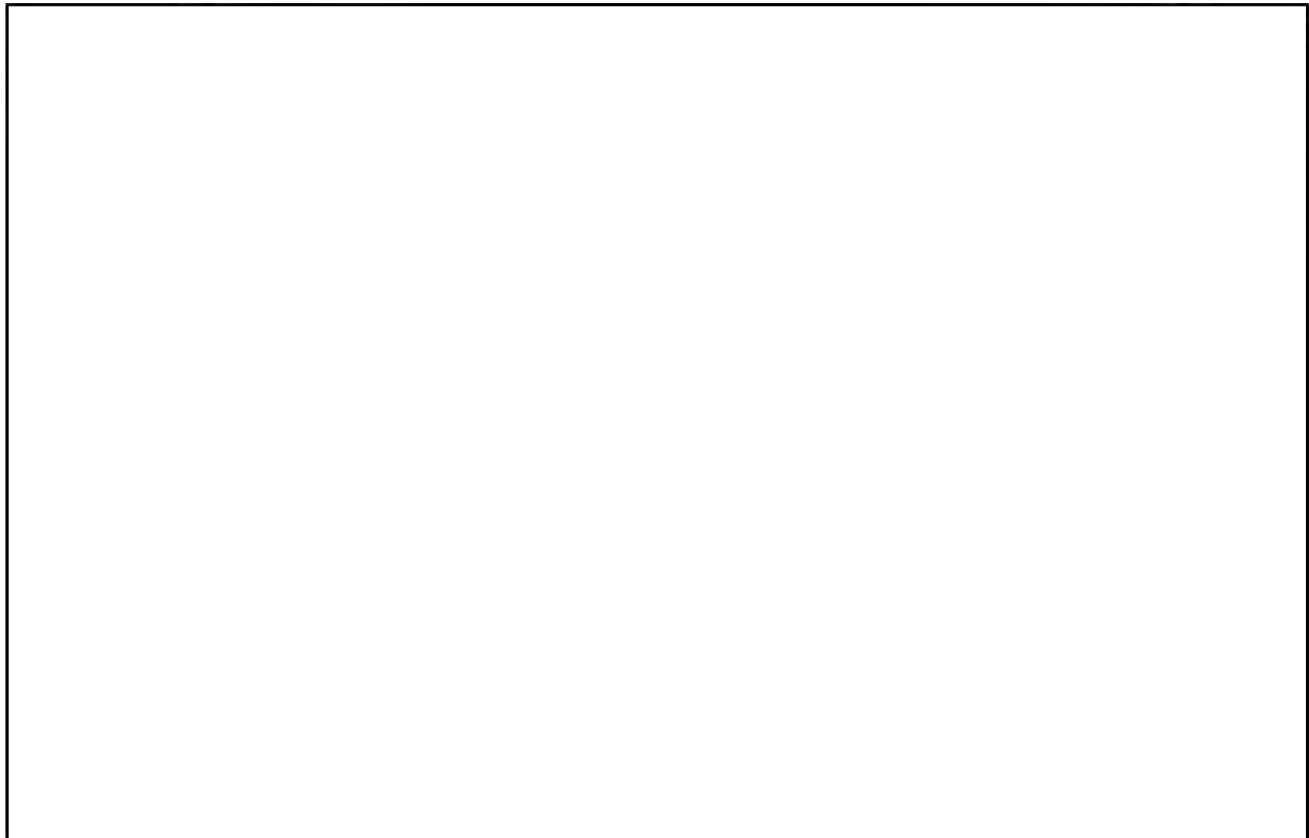
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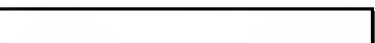
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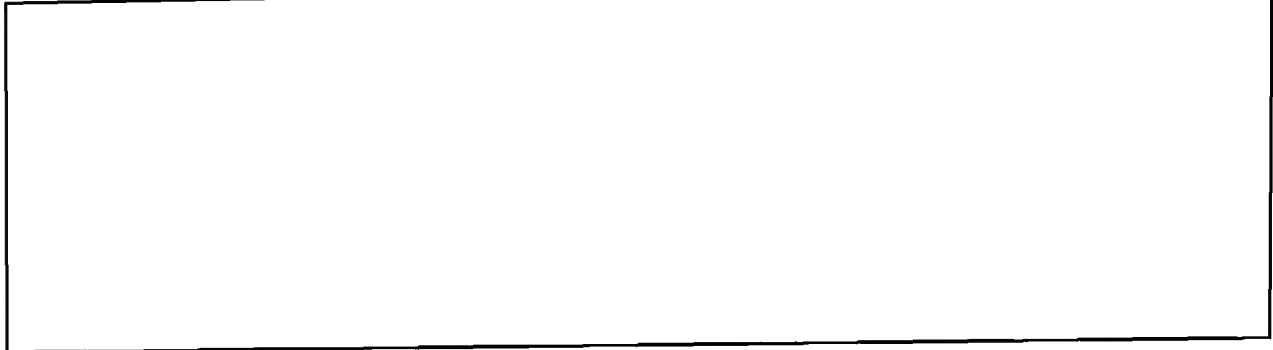
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GREECE-US-NATO: Attitude Toward Cooperation

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 //Prime Minister Caramanlis' attitude toward defense cooperation with the US is beginning to take shape.



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[REDACTED]//Negotiations between Greece and NATO have in fact moved rather slowly since the Greeks withdrew from the military side of the alliance during the Cyprus crisis in 1974. At that time, the view was widely held in the alliance that US-Greek defense relations must first be sorted out, and that the passage of time might permit some progress on Cyprus and increase Caramanlis' ability to recommit Greece fully to the alliance.//

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[REDACTED]//Since negotiations began in earnest last fall, however, the Turks have posed a series of objections; they oppose the special status for Greece envisaged by the negotiators, and are also pressuring the Greeks to stop lobbying against the US-Turkish Defense Cooperation Agreement signed in March 1976.//

25X1

[REDACTED]//The Greeks have long urged that the US use approval of the Turkish agreement to press for Turkish concessions on Cyprus and a less rigid Turkish attitude in the Aegean. They also fear that its passage, by again making a large amount of military supplies available to the Turks, would tip the balance of power against them. Indeed, they have made no secret of the fact that they would not be unhappy if neither agreement comes into force, especially since they are in a better economic position than Turkey to meet their defense needs.//

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[REDACTED]//Caramanlis resisted signing the US-Greek agreement before the parliamentary election partly because of domestic political considerations--particularly the strong showing of leftist Andreas Papandreou in the election--but also because he wanted to avoid facilitating US congressional approval of the Turkish agreement.//

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[REDACTED]

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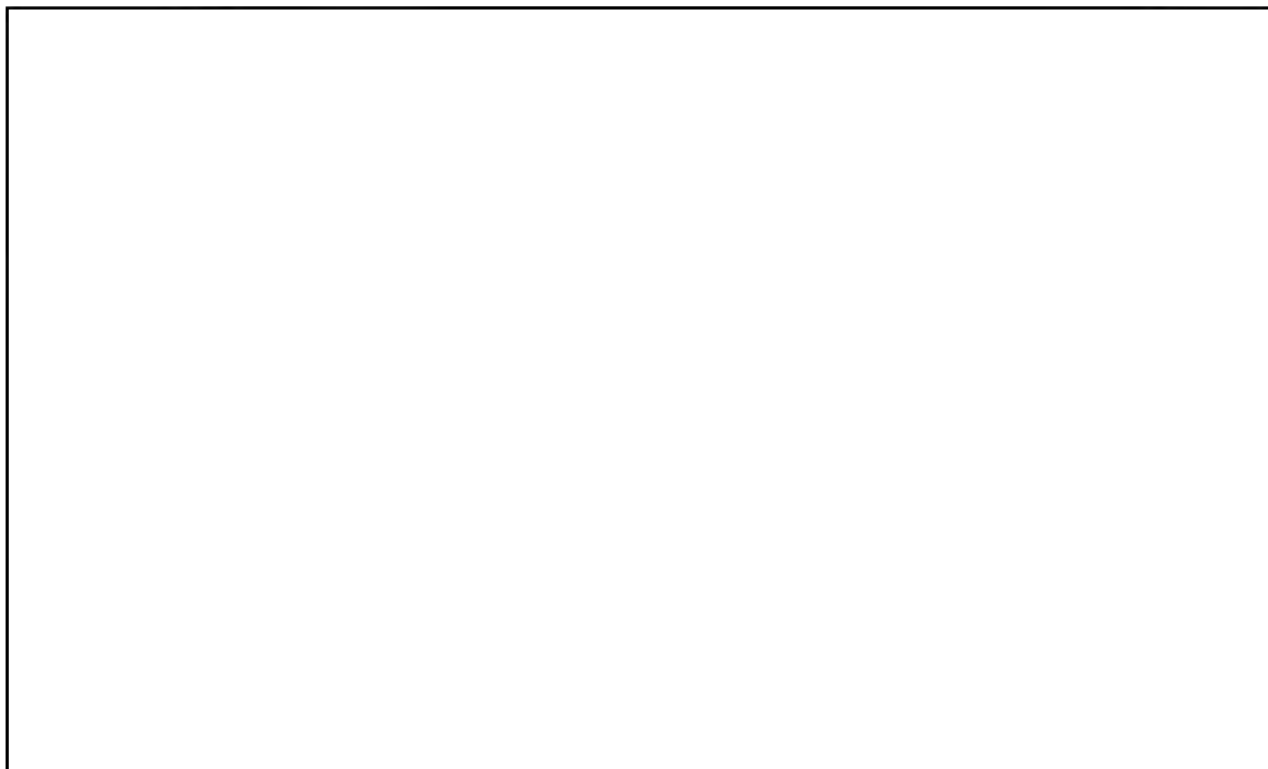
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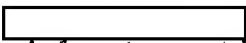
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MAURITANIA-ARGENTINA: Aircraft Purchases

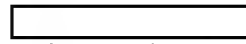
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 //Mauritania reportedly plans to purchase at least eight Argentine counterinsurgency aircraft to increase its capabilities to conduct aerial strikes against the Polisario Front guerrillas. This would be the first sale abroad of the Pucara, an aircraft Argentina has been actively promoting for export. Morocco, Mauritania's ally in the war against the Polisario Front, may also be interested in the Pucara.//

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 //The Mauritaniens have been looking for a suitable counterinsurgency aircraft for some time. For the past two years they have relied upon their small force of Britten-Norman Defenders, a modified version of a light transport aircraft, for attacks and reconnaissance against the guerrillas.//

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 //France, who is Mauritania's largest arms supplier, does not produce an aircraft comparable to the Pucara.

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] //Argentina exhibited the IA-58 Pucara at the Paris Air Show this year, the first time this plane has been outside South America. Although Argentina reportedly has demonstrated the Pucara in several countries, no contracts have yet been signed.//

[REDACTED] //The Pucara is Argentina's only military plane of national design in production. It is a two-seat turboprop plane best suited for close air support missions. Similar in capabilities and role to the US Bronco, the Pucara carries 1,500 kilograms of bombs and ammunition, has two 20-mm cannons and four 7.62-mm machine guns, and can land and take off from 400-meter long unimproved runways.//

[REDACTED] //The Pucara is ideal for many Third World countries. It is cheaper than high-performance jets, and its slow speed and loiter capability make it well-suited for use against both guerrilla bands and conventional ground units.//

[REDACTED] //The Argentine Air Force received its first Pucarases in mid-1976. Production has continued at a moderate pace; some 15 have been built to date. The Air Force has ordered 45, but the total production run--largely dependent on sales abroad--could be as high as 100 before the end of 1979. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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BRIEFS

Berlin

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[] East German border guards have apparently stopped demanding that holders of US diplomatic passports show an East German visa when traveling between East and West Berlin.

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[] Since 1965, these travellers have used a "flash procedure" to pass through East German checkpoints, showing only the cover and picture pages of their passports from inside their vehicles. In early September, however, East German guards began randomly to challenge this practice, presumably with Soviet approval. Although there were numerous minor delays no one was ever denied the right to pass.

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[] The latest change almost certainly results from a US demarche to the Soviets on 10 November. The Soviet official who received the demarche professed surprise at the East German actions, maintained that crossing procedures had not changed "so far as we know," and said he would check with the East German authorities.

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[] The Soviet attitude could, however, easily change if overall relations with the West should turn downward. The East Germans, for their part, remain eager to assert their "sovereignty" over the city's eastern sector. []

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China-USSR

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[] Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko met yesterday with the new Chinese Ambassador to Moscow, Wang Yu-ping. A brief Soviet announcement said that the meeting was held at the request of the Chinese Ambassador and that the two diplomats "had a conversation."

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25X1 [] Since his arrival in Moscow in August, Wang Yu-ping has met with several Soviet officials, including Prime Minister Kosygin. Although Peking's handling of other recent diplomatic contacts with Moscow appears to reflect an effort to put Sino-Soviet state-to-state relations on a more correct footing, the pattern of Wang's courtesy calls has so far paralleled that followed by the previous Chinese Ambassador after his arrival in Moscow in late 1970. []

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Nigeria

25X1 [] The government's program to register all voters within seven weeks--scheduled to have begun last week--has been postponed until mid-January. The federal electoral commission announced that the postponement was necessary to give Nigeria's 19 states time to launch publicity campaigns to register voters for the five state and federal elections required to install a civilian government by October 1979. The commission faces massive problems in trying to register an estimated 35 million to 45 million voters and further slippage in the registration period is likely.

25X1 [] Even after registrations have been completed, administrative problems will make it difficult for the military to honor its commitment to hand over power by the target date. Only one year--beginning next October--has been allotted for formally organizing political parties and holding the elections called for under the draft constitution. []

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USSR-Jamaica

25X1 [] //The USSR and Jamaica signed an economic and technical cooperation agreement last week in Kingston. The accord calls for construction of a large cement plant--the USSR's first project assistance to Jamaica--and possibly for several geological surveys. Moscow also offered to set up centers to train workers on agricultural and industrial machinery and motor vehicle repair and maintenance. The USSR also will furnish Soviet teachers to educational institutions in Jamaica and will receive Jamaicans in the USSR for industrial training.//

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[REDACTED] //The value of the agreement was not disclosed. Moscow probably will extend credits for equipment and technical assistance for the cement plant and possibly for the surveys as well.//

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[REDACTED] //Under the leadership of Prime Minister Michael Manley, Jamaica's political and economic contacts with the USSR have expanded. Jamaica failed, however, in previous attempts to gain Soviet balance-of-payments support and has not received any substantial Soviet aid. [REDACTED]

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